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6 February 1964

Mr. President:

I view with increasing concern and alarm the continuing and growing criticism of the Central Intelligence Agency. Of course, no agency is sacrosanct or above criticism. However, when the criticism takes the form of baseless accusations and includes not only distortions of the truth but facts manufactured out of whole cloth, I believe it is time to examine what is going on.

In my opinion, the Central Intelligence Agency is one of our most important agencies in the executive branch. By the very nature of its functions it cannot and should not respond to charges against it. Many of its activities of necessity must be shrouded in secrecy. As an arm of the President, it performs the tasks assigned to it.

Two Administrations have taken similar views as to this Agency's role. In November, 1959, President Eisenhower in referring to CIA said:

..!"Success cannot be advertised: failure cannot be explained. In the work of Intelligence, heroes are undecorated and unsung, often even among their own fraternity."

Two years later President Kennedy said:

"... Your successes are unheralded -- your failures are trumpeted. .... But I am sure you realize how important is your work, how essential it is -- and in the long sweep of history how significant your efforts will be judged."

One of the most frequent charges leveled at CIA is that it is a law unto itself and that it is an independent foreign policy-making body. The Agency's former Director for over eight years, Allen Dulles, for whom I have the highest personal regard, flatly lays this charge to rest. In his book, THE CRAFT OF INTELLIGENCE, he states:

"The facts are that CIA has never carried out any action of a political nature, given any support of any nature to any persons, potentates or movements, political or otherwise, without appropriate approval at a high political level in our government outside the CIA."

For many years the distinguished Senator from Georgia, Senator Russell, has been Chairman of the CIA Subcommittee of Senate Armed Services, and has had responsibility in that Subcommittee for knowing what the Agency is up to. Senator Russell said on this floor in 1956:

"Mr. President, the Central Intelligence Agency is far from being a policymaking agency. It makes no policy."

If the situation has changed since then, I am confident Senator Russell would be knowledgeable. The same basic charge of independent operations was made against the Agency in connection with its activities in South Vietnam last October. These charges became so serious at that time that the late President Kennedy was called upon to express himself by saying at his press conference on 9 October 1963:

"I must say I think the reports are wholly untrue. The fact of the matter is that Mr. McCone sits in the National Security Council. I imagine I see him at least three or four times a week, ordinarily. We have worked very closely together in the National Security Council in the last two months attempting to meet the problems we faced in South Viet Nam. I can find nothing, and I have looked through the record very carefully over the last nine months,

and I could go back further, to indicate that the CIA has done anything but support policy. It does not create policy; it attempts to execute it in those areas where it has competence and responsibility. ... I can just assure you flatly that the CIA has not carried out independent activities but has operated under close control of the Director of Central Intelligence, operating with the cooperation of the National Security Council and under my instructions."

The law which created CIA placed it under the National Security Council so that its activities would be integrated with the other departments represented on the Council which include the Department of Defense and Department of State with the Council itself headed by the President. During my experience as a member of the National Security Council it was abundantly clear that the Agency was functioning as an arm of the Presidency and responsive to the established foreign policy of this Government.

Since I have been a member of this body, I have been privileged on many occasions as a member of the Armed Services and the Foreign Relations Committees to be present at detailed intelligence briefings by both

the former Director and the present Director, John A. McCone.

These briefings have always been informative and stimulating and have been of tremendous assistance to those Committees in fulfilling their responsibilities for enacting legislation to ensure the security of this nation. At times in the past I have had occasion to disagree with certain of the conclusions presented in those briefings, but I have never had any occasion to question for one moment the complete integrity and competence of these CIA representatives.

While I do not possess the information to refute all of the accusations thrown at the Agency, I would like to discuss one by drawing on the open record of the Senate. In April of 1961, stories began to appear concerning CIA support for General Challe and his revolutionary cohorts in Algeria who were plotting the overthrow of de Gaulle. The origins of these stories are fully discussed in printed hearings. The witness before the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee on 2 June 1961

was Richard Helms, a senior official of CIA. Those hearings show that the first press mention of this story was in the IL PAESE in Italy on 23 April 1961 which is known as a vehicle to float Communist propaganda lines or fabrications. PRAVDA picked up the story and subsequently TASS distributed it the world over. Various Leftist newspapers in Europe played and replayed the story until eventually the western press printed the story thus bestowing an appearance of credibility, enhancing the further replay by Communist press organs. Thus the story itself while a complete fraud even today is retold and we find that the myth by repetition has become a legend of fact.

Today is not the time to debate whether a Joint Committee to supervise CIA is necessary. However, the record will show that during the debate in 1956 on the only Senate vote taken on such a measure I stated my view that such a Joint Committee was not necessary and voted against the resolution to establish it. The real point is that within the Congress

there are established Committees with responsibility for CIA affairs. In the Armed Services Committee, the Chairman has designated a Subcommittee which has legislative oversight over CIA. I have confidence that the distinguished members of that Committee, -- Senators Richard B. Russell, Harry Flood Byrd, John Stennis, and Leverett Saltonstall have fulfilled the great responsibilities placed on them.

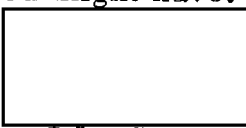
I am sure that these members believe, as I do, that the Central Intelligence Agency is an indispensable part of our national security mechanism. Those who attack it with baseless charges or inaccurate statements, knowing full well that the Agency cannot respond, are, in my opinion, doing a disservice to their country and are chipping away at a vital branch of our security forces.

It is time for both official and public opinion to accept a more realistic attitude toward what might be called casualties of intelligence operations in the cold war. We all know that the current turn of Soviet policy toward more friendly relations with the U. S. and the West only masks the continuing policy of subjecting our freedoms and liberties and those of our friends to the basic and relentless campaign of Communist espionage and subversion on a world-wide front.

I believe that the Western intelligence and security services including our own CIA which are effectively working against this assault are entitled to better treatment from their own press and public opinion. Inevitably there will be losses or reverses but these need not be the occasion for a crescendo of accusations of incompetency or free-wheeling, or even worse, making the Agency a target for deliberate distortion and ridicule. The dedicated and courageous men and women of the CIA need our understanding all the more since we cannot present to them personally their well deserved plaudits.



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<p>The attached is a draft speech which is proposed for delivery by Senator Symington on the floor. The Senator has a copy and has indicated that it is suitable and has asked for no further suggestions. The Director read this and asked if it could be beefed up. I would welcome any suggestions you might have.</p> <div style="text-align: right;"> John S. Warner</div>					
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